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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DS/IP/SA, DS/DSS/ITA, DSERCC AND SA/INS

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SUBJECT: COLOMBO EAC MEETING MARCH 25, 2003

REF: (A) COLOMBO 465

1. (SBU) On March 25, 2003 Colombo Emergency Action Committee (EAC) met to discuss the local security situation. The DCM chaired the EAC.
2. (SBU) The EAC agreed that the situation in Colombo is calm. The anti-U.S. protest on March 21, 2003 mobilized about 2000 people and was non-violent. No other protests are planned, however mission expects another will take place this Friday afternoon.
3. (SBU) The RSO briefed the EAC on the status of the security upgrades reported in reftel. The EAC decided to continue with Sri Lanka Police coverage on all residences. The EAC also agreed to continue using an LAV shuttle for transport to and from the Embassy for at least one more week. The RSO also informed the EAC that the Ambassador is now travelling with a police Special Task Force (STF) follow-car.
4. (SBU) RSO also noted that the British and Australian Embassies - reacting to our request for police coverage - now have police and military at all their official residences as well.
5. (SBU) The EAC agreed to maintain the current restrictive travel policy for at least one more week. Polchief noted that although the political situation is stable, reaction to a potentially bloody battle for Baghdad is unpredictable.
6. (SBU) The EAC agreed to meet again as needed, but no later than April 1.

Wills